

**THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
P.O.I.S.E.D. FOR SUCCESS\*  
PROGRAM**

**POISED Participant Success Stories  
2000-2010**



**TENTH ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM  
The City College of New York  
April 9, 2010**

*“Celebrating Ten Years of Helping Mothers Create a Legacy of Success for Themselves and their Families”*

**POISED FOR SUCCESS  
PARTICIPANT SUCCESS STORIES  
2000-2010**

**INTRODUCTION**

**In November 2009, the POISED for Success program celebrated its tenth anniversary of providing mothers of young children under age three with an opportunity to embark on a new journey in their lives, one that would bring them newly acquired skills, knowledge, confidence and the opportunity for employment and self-sufficiency.**

**Created in partnership with and funded by The City of New York Human Resources Administration (HRA) Family Independence Agency, POISED for Success has helped more than 1,650 women become employed, thousands to improve their academic skills and computer skills and/or earn their GEDs, hundreds to enroll in college at CUNY or elsewhere. The women served by POISED have learned to care for their own needs and health concerns as well as those of their children.**

**Often facing almost insurmountable obstacles and challenges, the women and their children served by the program over these ten years have received unwavering support, encouragement and guidance from their instructors and program staff at Bronx Community College, The City College and Medgar Evers College. The “*Success Stories*” that follow reflect the women’s enduring strength and spirit – their defeats and successes, barriers and breakthroughs.**

**Excerpts from thirty-eight success stories are presented from the more than seventy submitted for this occasion. These success stories are a testament to the indomitable drive of POISED participants to overcome these challenges and create a legacy of success for themselves and their families. We hope you enjoy reading about our participants’ efforts to become “POISED for Success,” in their own words.**

## **POISED Participant Success Stories 2000-2010**

### 2000

“POISED II has so far been therapy [for me] and the catalyst for transition back to the working world. Due to stress and ill health, I have not been living up to my full potential as the energized, fun loving, hardworking person I used to be. Approaching the age of forty and having a baby without proper financial support makes things very hard, especially, after rearing two girls ages 18 and 12. The depression that used to come with this was worse than the physical pain that often interrupted my daily routine.

POISED I was instrumental in my achieving my G.E.D. POISED II, is helping me by providing caring instructors who, through their efforts, have motivated me to want to try harder to accomplish my goals. Now that I am getting ready to re-enter the work world, my job readiness skills are being sharpened. In addition to encouragement there is solid advice from my parenting and health teacher regarding health and wellness, which I take very seriously as this has changed my concept of dieting and my outlook in life. I realize now that a healthy body is one that is conscious of preventive measures, good stress management and spiritual wholeness. [I have learned] how to cope with the wonderful task of preparing my children to become productive members of society. Before [these] classes it was all trial and error with very frustrating days of wishing for a parental book.

With all the help that POISED II has been providing, I am now able to face the challenges of work and school. I am now employed at Medgar Evers College in the Office of External Programs. I enjoy coming to work each day and going to classes in the evenings to upgrade my office skills. I am about to take the CUNY entrance exam to start college”.

*D.A., Medgar Evers College*

### 2001

“The POISED Program was developed to give women the opportunity to enrich their parenting skills, refresh their basic skills, such as reading, writing, and math, learn computer applications, and eventually prepare us for employment. This is a perfect opportunity for mothers who have been out of the work field for a while, or out of school, or who have never worked before.

POISED was an excellent opportunity offered to me by HRA. The thought of being back in a classroom seemed like a great idea to me. I knew I would be given the chance to refresh my basic skills, especially math. I was never that good in math and this program has helped me to improve my skills. As for the reading and writing, they are my favorite subjects, so I always enjoy reading new things and writing about them. It has helped me to learn to express myself. The parenting class is great. As mothers, we must learn the development of our children and this class gives us the chance to learn from each other’s experiences with our children.

I believe that the computer class and the job preparation classes go hand-in-hand. Computer literacy is very important in job searching. Most companies require that you know certain computer programs. The job preparation class discusses the dos and don’ts in job searching and interviews. It helps us understand what is expected of us during an interview and eventually what to expect when we get the job. I have learned not to be nervous and to be more confident about myself and my abilities. I personally want to take 100% of what is given to me, so that I gain the most of it. POISED has empowered me as a mother, a woman, and a future employee”.

*A.M., Medgar Evers College*

“Getting into the [POISED] program ...helped me understand what my responsibilities were other than my children. I was going out into the real world job searching and going on interviews... [The job developer] asked me to call the new Toys “R” Us store in the heart of Times Square... At first I was doubtful and not sure I would get the job but I called anyway. The interview was excellent and the interviewer told me I got the job. I was stunned.... Having a job is the best thing a person can have. I feel like I’ve accomplished my dream. My happiness is unexplainable”.

*M.R., Bronx Community College*

“This is the first time I am in a WEP assignment. So far, I enjoy being here. I am here to prepare myself to pursue my Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Child Psychology. I have to improve my writing skills. The reading and writing classes help me focus on my spelling and grammar skills.

Parenting is very exciting. I am learning new things here. When I go home, I add the things I learned in parenting to my everyday routines. Another class that interests me is health: for example, breast cancer, colon cancer, asthma, and annual check-up. Another good class is computers. Although I know the basics, the class shows me more things that I did not know. This program...not only ...increases your education level but it also prepares you to get a job. Some people don’t know how to dress for an interview. Speaking to an interviewer, asking questions, answering questions, and how to present yourself are all very important. Even though I know how to dress, speak, and ask questions, there are other things in the job readiness class that I have learned that I believe will help me: for example, how to follow-up on interviews”.

*L.A., Medgar Evers College*

## 2002

“I discovered in my 13 weeks [in the POISED] program that I could continue my education and work to support my family. No one other than myself can hold me back. I had some really great instructors, and they showed me how to improve my basic skills as well as my computer skills. It’s fortunate that mothers on PA have this program to help them face the transition from welfare-to-work. I’m glad I participated”.

*K.W., Bronx Community College*

## 2003

“I did not think this program was for me, but it gave me the will to continue college. Because of this program, I was able to understand math concepts better...and learned more about taking care of my kids as well as myself. It also gave me a chance to relate with other mothers like myself. This program has had a positive impact on my life... I believe I am a better person because of it”.

*M.S., Bronx Community College*

## 2004

**“The POISED for Success program has strengthened my education, work, and family, and has enabled me to leave an important legacy to my children. When I first started the POISED program, to tell you the truth it was hard, especially since I hadn’t been in school for over twenty years. But once I started working out the problems with my classmates and my teacher, I started getting back into it; and what I once thought was unknown began to be familiar again. I’m still having a few problems with math, but I’m learning not to be deterred by challenges. My**

essays have strengthened, not only in terms of an increased vocabulary but also the way I can express myself with the words I use.

The program has also taught me work ethics and good habits, like getting up early and being on time every morning. Having to be at school from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. is just like going to work. Since being in the program I've learned how to juggle my family and education at the same time. As a result of this, I will be able to deal with this requirement when I begin to work.

My children now look up to me and tell me how proud they are of me because I'm back in school, and that's a great feeling not only for them but for me also. The lesson I'm teaching my children is to never give up on education because it's never too late to learn. Part of the legacy I leave my children is the knowledge that education is the way to a good job and a better life".

*B.B., Medgar Evers College*

"The POISED at Home program has been a good program for me because I get to talk to someone about my life goals. I have gained more insight and knowledge that I will need when taking care of my family and getting my GED. [The instructors] are helping to prepare me for what's really out there. POISED gives me the opportunity to get hands-on experience while tending to the needs of my family in the comfort of my home.

Each visit is more than a lecture; you have someone who can relate to what you're going through and help you get through those rough times. The social worker's visits are very important as well. I've learned that there are different ways to care for a baby and that not every baby is the same. I feel that by gaining education I can better provide for my family and maintain employment. I am really grateful that I have had the opportunity to participate in the POISED at Home program and to meet people who know what some of us are going through".

*C.C., Bronx Community College*

"This program has really changed my life around. When I first started I did not think that I was going to stay. But the more I attended classes, the more I got into the program and decided to stay. The program has helped prepare me for the GED by offering me basic skills. My teacher really worked hard with me on the preparation of my essay. I received an award of recognition from HRA and was allowed to attend the fifth year celebration of the POISED program. I would like to enroll in college for nursing. This program has motivated me to further my education, so I can get a good paying job and can provide a better life for my kids".

*T.J., Bronx Community College*

"I have to be all that I can be, so I can complete college to achieve more than the average high school diploma. I need to find a career that I enjoy and also have a great salary. I want to leave behind a legacy of hard work for my son. My goal is to be his role-model as well as his mother. I refuse to fail because our lives are dependent on my success. The POISED for Success program has strengthened this determination.

I want to do this for myself, but more importantly for my son because he looks up to me. I want him to realize that continuing his education, despite setbacks encountered, is in his best interest. He will know that I worked hard to go further in life, which would make everything worthwhile for us.

POISED for Success allows me to leave my son a legacy of strength and hard work".

*S.T., Medgar Evers College*

“As a result of being in [POISED] I have decided on my career choice. In winter 2005, I will be attending the Metropolitan College of New York to major in human services. After that I will re-register at the same college to obtain my certified alcohol and substance abuse counseling certificate. Thank you so much for helping me to get my foot in the door. Now it’s up to me to keep walking through it. ... I’ve been given back something I thought was long gone, and that is hope, drive and determination”.

*S. H., Bronx Community College*

## 2005

*One student who stands out as a success story is A.R. She began the POISED program in spring 2005. While in orientation, A.R. wrote down her goals and aspirations. However...she lacked motivation and came to class almost daily with an unpleasant facial expression.*

*A.R.’s attendance started to slip and she was counseled on her attendance and attitude by several staff members. A.R. began working harder in her GED class. A.R.’s instructor provided her with extra help. The counseling staff also helped her to redirect her negative energy into positive energy.*

*Slowly, we saw a different facial expression, attire and overall attitude. A.R. began seeking employment with the help of the employment staff and was hired by American Girl. In fall 2005, she spoke to the women of the POISED program at an incentive ceremony and told them about her attitude and her struggles, and impressed upon them that the staff is here to help and support them and that if she could turn her life around then they could too.*

*A.R. recently stopped by the office to pick up materials to review for the GED. She was radiant! I have never seen anyone happier with their place of employment. A.R. lit up the main office with her enthusiasm and stories of her accomplishments. She commanded everyone’s attention in the office, and we all listened intently with smiles on our faces.*

*The City College Staff*

“My experience with the POISED at Home program has been a positive one. In the beginning I was a little suspect about having two strangers come into my home and tell me what I could or should be doing to provide for me and my child, but to my surprise it was nothing like what I thought it would be. The social worker and teacher that came to visit me were always honest with me and I appreciated that. The POISED at Home team has taught me that I can do better in life. They have inspired me to continue to prepare for my GED so that I may obtain the skills necessary to get a job that will support both me and my child without the help of welfare. I have learned how to be a more responsible and attentive parent who has the ability to show my child something different in life beside welfare. They helped me to believe in myself. They made me realize that I could be somebody. They helped me to focus on what was important and that I was raising my daughter to be the best that she could be. I’ve learned to accept who I am and use that to help transform me into who I will become”.

*J.H., The City College*

“When I first came [to POISED], I couldn’t read and write English correctly...but with the help of my teachers, now I read and write English better... I learned how to use a computer and how to type. I learned so many things in this program that will help me in my life. This program is the best opportunity for those who want to succeed”.

*F.T., Bronx Community College*

## 2006

"When I was assigned to this program I thought it was a waste of time. But after listening and experiencing what the program had to offer I knew it was up to me to make the best of it. The mentors in this program are here to help you...if you are scared they help you bring up that confidence that you are lacking. In this program you are taught the basics of what it takes to succeed in your career, in school or in your personal environment.

Where am I now? [My teachers] taught me how to handle certain situations and taught me techniques in problem solving and taught me how to control my nerves when presenting myself to an employer. My teachers helped me write an excellent resume and cover letter. I was also taught different interview techniques and the proper way to answer questions. [I learned] the basics in Excel, typing skills and how to navigate the Internet. These mentors along with others taught me so many things...I'll tell you this from my personal experience, there isn't one thing that I learned in P.O.I.S.E.D. that I have not used to my advantage. So where am I now? I am the new office assistant at the Career Center in the City College of New York".

*J.T., The City College*

*B.M. entered the POISED at Home program in winter 2006. At the time of entry she was six months into a high risk pregnancy. This made her the ideal candidate for our program. After completing all requirements for the program, BM later transitioned into the POISED program on campus. Since then she has been gainfully employed at the BMCC Tribeca Film Festival and has passed her GED exam. It is participants like her who make POISED at Home and POISED for Success a SUCCESS.*

*Bronx Community College Staff*

**"I first began the POISED program at City College in winter 2007 when I was pregnant. It was a great opportunity to help sharpen my skills for the job market so that once the baby was born I can go back to work. I was put on exemption because it was a month away from my due date, and that's when I started the POISED at Home program. I loved the writing assignments and the motivation [my teachers] gave me. Since I already had a high school diploma, the POISED at Home curriculum was geared more towards sharpening the skills I needed for a job and getting into college (writing, math, and job readiness).**

**After the baby was born, I went back to the POISED program [on campus] and worked on obtaining a job. I got a lot of help from my instructors on my resume and on my appearance. [I worked on] fine tuning my computer skills and on my parenting skills through group counseling. In about a month after returning to the program I found a job working at a political fundraising consulting firm in Manhattan for 25k a year as a receptionist/ administrative assistant. Having a job and paying my bills and no longer [being] dependent on public assistance gave me a liberated feeling that I cannot begin to describe".** (M.C. later went on to work at a Foundation earning \$45,000 with plans to attend college at night.)

*M.C., The City College*

## 2007

"Coming into the program I had no confidence with getting a job. The POISED for Success staff encouraged me and prepared me totally by creating a resume, preparing me for the interview process and giving me job ready tips. I was also sent out on many job fairs, which is how I got this job at Madame Tussauds (the wax museum) in Times Square. I started work in November 2007 and I am so happy with my job. I am very grateful that I was enrolled in this specific program. Without the staff's help it would have taken me much longer to get not only a job but the confidence to get work and to do the work".

***C.F., The City College***

“When I first came to POISED, I was six months pregnant and confused. In orientation, I immediately felt a sense of security. I thought of this program as a home away from home. A place where I can take my dreams and nurture them. When I felt worthless and depressed, coming here gave me confidence and ambition from the encouragement of my instructors. I feel like these women truly enjoy helping women like myself attain their goals and thrive in life.

After I delivered my daughter, I returned to POISED with a new sense of confidence and drive... [I wanted] to make something of myself and leave a legacy for my pride and joy. POISED helped me realize I am worth any opportunity that comes my way... I’ve been molded into an ambitious, confident and self-reliant person - a person who takes pride in being a woman who isn’t afraid to tackle obstacles. Here I’ve been given the tools to build my road to the future and be an [asset] to my community”.

***C.M., Bronx Community College***

[Being in the POISED program]...“is a great opportunity for young mothers like me to get a chance to get our lives back together. We get a chance to get our GED, enroll into college, and find a good job. In POISED I, my teacher prepared me to take my GED test, and showed me how to do math problems... [In parenting and health], I learned how to act with my kids, to control my anger, and teach them about good and bad things in life. I learned how to work with Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and I got a chance to improve my typing skills. POISED II is more work related, and we have to be more serious about it. We have to dress for success, and look for jobs. But the good thing is that I learned how to do my resume, cover letter, and thank you letter, which is something I never knew how to do before. I learned what to do and what not to do when I go on a job interview, but most of all I learned to be independent”.

***L.V., Bronx Community College***

“When I began this program I wasn’t sure about what I wanted to do with my life. I am a mother of three who did not graduate high school. I had difficulties with math and at times I felt discouraged. My teacher helped me a lot and made me feel comfortable. I passed my GED test and I am so proud of myself. I finally accomplished one of my goals and now I can go off to college and get a part time job. This program was just an eye opener for me and it made me look at things differently. I take life more seriously and I know I can do anything I want as long as I put my mind to it”.

***T.R., The City College***

**2008**

*C.C. had been attending Bronx Community College when she became pregnant with her third daughter in 2006. At that time she had no intention of returning to school having had three children under the age of 5 and with bills piling up. Her only intention was to get a job right away. When she learned about the POISED program she was quickly motivated and eager to start the program. C.C. said that while in POISED she received helpful counseling, guidance on proper dress, computer and typing skills and words of encouragement and unlimited advice from her instructors. C.C. stated:*

“Even after my completion of the POISED for Success program, I continue to utilize [my instructors’] constant examples of encouragement. Now this is not my complete success story for my success is ongoing. But so far, I went back to school in the fall of 2006 and then came back to POISED for Success as a work study student and peer motivator for newly enrolled POISED students. I now have a job as a tax professional at H&R BLOCK and I am graduating from BCC in the spring with a degree in education...I plan on continuing my education at Lehman College and obtaining a second job at a Head Start program where I am currently working as an intern. I

also have a message to you and all the newly enrolled women of the POISED for Success program. This is a slogan that I would recite every day for inspiration that is currently posted in the main office. As it states, ‘Winners are too busy to be sad, too positive to be doubtful, too optimistic to be fearful and too determined to be defeated’ ”

***C.C., Bronx Community College***

“I initially came to POISED for Success to find employment, but what I ended up with was life-long friendships and knowledge that is making me a better woman. Because of the poor economy and my rapidly depleting funds I ended up on public assistance. When I was assigned to attend the POISED for Success program I automatically had my doubts, but I was surprised to be greeted by a friendly family atmosphere. The POISED staff made it evident that we were there to find jobs, better our education, and better our parenting and health skills. These are all attributes that contribute to us being productive, employed women. I currently don’t have a foolproof life plan but I have the mental preparation and the drive that I need to help me get where I want to be. I have been showing interest in attending Home Health Aide classes, and if I am as good as I think I am at helping others, I intend on signing up for nursing school”.

***E.M.R., The City College***

“I’m glad that I had a chance to be in POISED for Success because it helped me better my life. Thanks to this program I got my GED and I’ll be able to continue my education. It took me a few months before I found a job but right now I’ll working and I feel like I’m on the right track to a better future.

While in the program, I was able to make new friends and be inspired by my instructors. I am working as a customer service representative and I like it. I did not want to take this job but I am so glad that I did. Now that I am employed I am so confident. It feels good to get a paycheck each week. I will not be a customer service representative forever – but it is a step in the right direction. I plan to take classes to become an esthetician. Thank you POISED for Success!!!!”

***A. W., The City College***

“The job readiness teacher has helped me a lot. She is a very motivated speaker. She really helped me with a couple of interviews like how to talk and present myself and speak very confident[ly]. The parenting and health teacher has helped me become a great mom, she has taught me a lot of things I really didn’t know about children. The POISED Program is a great program to get your life back together and get your feet back on the road to getting your future for you and your children back in order. The POISED Program has helped me become a good mother and an outstanding woman”.

***L.D., Medgar Evers College***

*E.R. is an 18 year old high school graduate and soon to be mother. With a new baby girl on the way and speaking limited English, E.R. reached out to the POISED program for help. She has since completed her college application and has been accepted to Bronx Community College for the spring semester. Ms. R’s biggest challenge is the English language. In the interim she has enrolled in ESL classes on campus. With the time and effort that Ms. R. has shown it is most definite that she will go on to great things. E.R. has already begun to show her new baby-to-be the type of role model that she is.*

***Bronx Community College Staff***

“While in POISED, I obtained my GED, I found full-time employment and I am currently enrolled at The Borough of Manhattan Community College as a full-time student.

I am the parent of three children. I am willing to do what I have to do. I attend school during the week and on Sundays. Anyone can do the same at POISED. The teachers will do what they have to do to help you strive to reach your goals. You do not only work hard for yourself – but for your children as well. Thanks to the staff at POISED for Success, I am on my way to reaching my goals”.

*E.P., The City College*

“Coming to this program and not knowing what I was in for, I was thinking of every excuse of how to get out of the program... I was placed in [a class where the focus] is on getting your GED... [The teacher] made me feel as if I were the only student in the room. Her having faith in me that I would pass with flying colors made me believe that maybe I can really do it. I was sent to take my GED exam. [I was] so nervous that I wouldn’t pass I was thinking only negative things. I must have asked my teacher a 1,000 times a week if the results were in. I started to lose faith and to give up and those negative thoughts came back to my mind. I started to believe that I didn’t pass but ...my teacher came into class smiling at me but not the usual smile that she gives. She came to me and gave me the biggest hug and congratulated me on obtaining my GED. I felt like she was really proud of me like a mother would be proud of her child for a big accomplishment... I felt really good about myself after knowing what a good job I had done.

I am leaving [the program] with my GED under my belt and a feeling of self-confidence that I can better provide for my children and [myself] in the future. Something that might have taken me months or even years to obtain, I have obtained in a mere two months”.

*T.W., The City College*

“During my time in the P.O.I.S.E.D program I plan on bettering my computer skills along with my math and people skills. I believe that...I will learn how to deal with my problems in a more effective way. I also want to learn how to become an outstanding employee.

I strongly believe that I will become employed because of the help I’m going to receive in the program. Not only will I get a job, but I’ll get a well paying job, one that I can enjoy doing. Maybe even a career, a long lasting relationship with a company that will enjoy having me as an employee.

As I sit here and look around at the faces of the other women in the room with me, I think maybe we can end up being friends. We can network maybe to help each other find different jobs if needed. We can tell each other about fun things or places we can do with our children. We may end up working together maybe even life long friends.

I plan on going back to college and if I can better my skills I’ll score higher on the entrance exam and get into a regular math class instead of a remedial class, when I return to college”.

*D.G., Medgar Evers College*

**“If it wasn’t for POISED at Home, I wouldn’t be working on my GED or getting a job. POISED at Home has pushed me a little closer to my goals. Staff made me realize that I have to fight for my little girl and make a better future for her. And that is what I plan on doing right at this moment”.** (*L. C. has since found employment as a part-time home health aide.*)

*L.C., The City College*

## 2009

“I am so thankful for the POISED at Home program. The staff helps you out in all areas. I have never been helped in all my life by people that are so great with information. Since I have been working with POISED at Home, I gained a lot of confidence. Also, I improved my reading, writing and math skills and I hope to move into the POISED [on campus] program, so that I could

improve my typing skills, update my resume and get a job". (*While working with POISED at Home, S.C. completed her mini-manual, had an educational gain, transitioned into the POISED for Success program, and received the Student of the Month and POISED at Home Completer Awards. At this time, S.C. is attending the College of New Rochelle for her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology).*

***S.C., The City College***

“For me POISED stands for:

- P= Perseverance**
- O= Obligation**
- I= Inspiration**
- S= Success**
- E=Education**
- D=Dedication**

The staff at POISED gave me the tools I needed to *Persevere*, reminded me of my *Obligation* to myself and my children, *Inspired* me to not give up, reinforced my need to *Succeed*; while providing *Education* in academics as well as life, the staff at POISED is *Dedicated* to each student they enroll.

Since graduation from POISED in 2004, I remain gainfully employed. During the time that I have been working, I've obtained my High School Equivalency Diploma and my Associate of Arts degree in Human Services. I'm now in the process of registering for my bachelor's degree followed by my master's degree. So, "Cinderella" stories do exist".

***S.H. Bronx Community College***

“My experience with the POISED at Home program has been very rewarding. “What have I learned from the program? I've learned things ...that will aide in making me a better mother and person. I've strengthened my math and reading skills and regained focus and am striving toward obtaining my GED. I am confident that with the help of the POISED at Home program staff I will pass. My teacher has taught me new parenting skills, such as the different ways that I can praise my children, as well as discipline them. I am way more informed than I was before. I feel as though I can handle all of the twists and turns that life brings my way”.

***Y.V., Bronx Community College***

“The day that I had to come to this program I was upset because I just wanted to work to make money for my family. When I found out that I still had a chance to get my G.E.D, I became very happy. I've been trying to get my G.E.D for almost five years. Coming to the POISED program helped me a lot. I started to study again, and it made me feel that I lost out on a lot of things in my life. It made me look at my life and say to my self “I have to lock myself down and do what I have to do to better myself and my children, to make our life greater than what it is now”. I took my G.E.D test and failed by ten points on my writing. I was upset, but happy because I made the next step for me and my family. I will take it again and this time I will pass, and I will go to college, and I will be able to tell my children you could do and be anything you want to be if you put your mind to it. I would've never thought like this if I never made it to the POISED program”.

***S.B., Medgar Evers College***

“I came to POISED very bitter and unfocused and while here came to realize that my current financial situation does not define me. To my surprise and delight POISED has helped to strengthen me. I have rediscovered my confidence in my skills, charisma and determination. I have gone on several promising interviews and realized, “I've still got it”. When I say “it”, I mean the ability to sell myself and leave a positive impression after an interview. I may not get the job and that's OK. Each time I'm sharpening my skills and growing more confident. Going on

those interviews allowed me the opportunity to rid myself of my limitations on pushing/selling myself at an interview. Very soon I will have my pick from many job offers. POISED has also helped me to reconnect with the passions that lead me to become an entrepreneur. My mission now is to be successful and to leave my mark on this world”.

***D.T., The City College***

“When my caseworker recommended that I attend POISED, I was extremely reluctant... However, attending the P.O.I.S.E.D. program was of great assistance despite how I felt in the beginning. I feel like this program is a success because it offers GED preparation in a professional setting in addition to having staff/employees that can help with other issues that might have deterred me from earning my GED. As a result I obtained my GED in four months.

Another goal that I would like to achieve is completing two years of schooling to earn my Associate’s degree as a Registered Nurse. The program has helped me to improve academically and has gotten me back into the habit of what it’s like to be a full time student and to balance achieving my goals and raising my son at the same time. I’m where I stand because since the age of seventeen, I’ve lived check to check to survive...Fortunately and unfortunately after seven years and at the age of twenty three, I realized that I needed to set higher goals for myself to achieve. With the help of P.O.I.S.E.D. everything is falling into place”.

***T.E., Medgar Evers College***

“I’ve been fast tracked [*accelerated in the program because of prior experience*] and it feels good to know that I’m a little closer to jumping back into work. I’m really anxious to start once again. The program has prepared me for interviewing. There were a lot of tips given me about interviewing that I know for sure will help me obtain a job.

There are so many little things that I have learned along the way that add up to learning a new world. It is really nice to know that there are programs that help mothers who haven’t gotten their high school diplomas to get a GED and also mothers like me who have gone to college”.

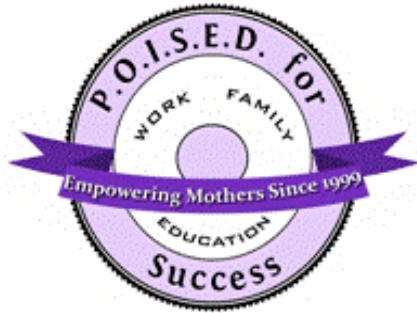
***C.A., Bronx Community College***

## ***2010***

“Due to the training that I have acquired in [job readiness] classes, I am now a successful case coordinator for a well-known home care agency. I am the product of drop-out, drug and alcohol addicted parents. At the age of seventeen, I pushed myself through a GED program and obtained my diploma within three months. I raised myself until I was about 18 years old...I found myself ill equipped to enter the work force so I applied for public assistance. Now at that time you needed to either enroll in a work assignment or take a training class. I believe this is where fate took its turn for me because I was sent to the POISED program.

I improved upon my academic skills...and learned different types of computer skills. While academically I was preparing to enter the workforce, I was emotionally and mentally unprepared. I was a first time mom with no one to help guide me and was stressed because of the poor choices I had made growing up. The most important advice that I believe I have received was from my job readiness teacher when she told me that, “To be a woman is an empowering thing, we are strong and intelligent creatures who can do anything if we put our minds to it!” So that is just what I did and I have yet to stop. After completing the POISED program, I went on to train with a home care agency where I managed a Bronx case load of two hundred clients and a housekeeping case load of one hundred and twelve. I am now a full-time student at Monroe College where I have earned and continue to maintain 4.0 G.P.A.”

***A.M., Bronx Community College***



[www.cuny.edu/poised](http://www.cuny.edu/poised)